

PALM BEACH-MARTIN COUNTIES CHAPTER

FUNERAL & SURVIVOR GUIDE

A Life of Service, Faith, Family and Honor

A practical guide for loved ones, caregivers, clergy,
funeral directors and service representatives.

Prepared for:

Important

Keep this guide with discharge and retirement records, burial plans, insurance and estate-document locations. Tell a trusted person where it is kept. Do not enter passwords, full account numbers or Social Security numbers.

What to Do First

Take one step at a time. A trusted family member and funeral director can help coordinate the first hours and days.

1. Contact the appropriate professional.

For an unexpected death or uncertainty about immediate safety, call emergency services. If hospice is involved, follow its instructions. Contact the chosen funeral director once appropriate arrangements can begin.

2. Bring someone alongside you.

Ask a trusted person to help with calls, notes and practical decisions. Locate this guide and any prearranged funeral instructions.

3. Gather service and family records.

Find discharge documents, retirement orders, a burial pre-need decision if available, and relevant family certificates. Give sensitive identifiers only through an agency's secure process.

4. Plan the service and burial.

Discuss faith or personal preferences, cemetery arrangements, burial flag and appropriate service honors with the director. Confirm eligibility and availability with the responsible service.

5. Obtain certified death certificates.

Ask the funeral director how many copies may be needed and how to obtain more.

6. Notify the right organizations.

Contact the retired-pay provider, VA where applicable, and MOAA. Confirm that Social Security has received the death report. Use the call sheet in this guide.

7. Preserve records and ask for guidance.

Ask the estate representative or attorney before moving assets or closing accounts. Keep a record of calls, names, dates and next steps.

Why This Guide Matters

Preparation is an act of care for the people who may one day need to act on your behalf.

A written plan gives family members a starting point during a difficult time. It records the people to contact, the location of essential documents, and the wishes that make a service personal.

Complete the blank sections at your own pace. Talk through the choices with family, the funeral director and your clergy or celebrant. Update the guide after changes in family circumstances or arrangements.

The guide includes Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, NOAA Corps and U.S. Public Health Service. Benefits and honors depend on individual eligibility and service rules.

Download and save the PDF before filling it out. Dropdowns allow common choices and custom entries. Keep a private completed copy and tell trusted people where to find it. Nothing in this form is submitted to the chapter.

This is a planning aid. It does not replace a will, a legal directive, professional advice or the current instructions of the responsible agency.

Inside this guide

First steps; why preparation matters; service-specific contact routes; a personal order of service; obituary and family remembrance worksheets; and a fillable survivor planning checklist with call sheet and print button.

Service Contacts & Official Resources

Use the call sheet in the fillable section for VA, DFAS, Social Security and MOAA telephone numbers. These additional routes help identify the correct service office.

Army, Navy, Air Force, Space Force & Coast Guard

Ask the funeral director to use the Military OneSource funeral-honors directory for the service and ceremony location. For help finding the appropriate office: 800-342-9647.

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/military-funeral-honors/>

Marine Corps

HQMC Funeral Honors: 866-826-3628. Email HQMC.Funeral.Honors@USMC.mil. Have proof of honorable service and ceremony details ready.

<https://www.hqmc.marines.mil/Agencies/Casualty-MFPC/Funeral-Honors/>

NOAA Corps

Use the NOAA Corps Commissioned Personnel Center retiree benefits directory to identify the appropriate retired-pay and survivor-benefit office. Ask the Corps about service-specific honors.

https://www.corpscpc.noaa.gov/benefits/dirassist_retiree.html

Coast Guard / NOAA / Public Health retired-pay routing

Contact U.S. Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center customer support at 866-772-8724 for routing assistance, or use the pay provider shown on the retiree's statement. Do not assume DFAS handles every service.

<https://www.dcms.uscg.mil/ppc/>

U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

Contact the Commissioned Corps office for casualty, survivor and honors guidance. Ask the retired-pay provider identified on the pay statement about death reporting and survivor payments.

<https://www.usphs.gov/>

Contact routes reviewed October 7, 2026. Confirm current requirements when calling. Record the assigned service contact in the local-contacts page.

My Order of Service

Use this outline with the clergy or celebrant. A faith community may have its own rules for readings, music and family remembrance.

Gathering / visitation / opening music

Prayers, readings or opening reflections

Faith service / celebrant / main tribute

Family remembrance / speakers

Service honors / flag recipient / closing words

Closing music / committal / reception

My Obituary & Life Story

Leave the facts and memories you would like included. Confirm the final wording with the family before publication.

Birthplace, family background and important life milestones

Service history, work, education and community contributions

Family and loved ones to mention (confirm names)

Values, interests, memories and preferred obituary wording

Family Remembrance & Funeral Choices

A remembrance can be simple: a story, a value passed on, and a few words of gratitude.

Designated speaker / relationship / contact

Stories, lessons, words of thanks or closing tribute

Practical funeral decisions

Discuss choices and costs with the funeral director before making selections. Ask for itemized prices, confirm cemetery requirements, and record prearranged contracts and agreed arrangements in the checklist. Choose what reflects the person and the family's circumstances.

Additional arrangements / questions / instructions

Next: Your fillable planning checklist

The next nine pages include telephone contacts, local contacts, service records, funeral wishes, household and financial-document locations, family actions and follow-up notes. The final page has a print button.

Survivor Call Sheet

Palm Beach-Martin Counties Chapter | Keep this page at the front of your planning file

DFAS Retired & Annuitant Pay

800-321-1080

Report a military retiree's death; ask about final pay and SBP.

<https://www.dfas.mil/retdeath>

MOAA Member Service Center

800-234-6622 | 703-549-2311

Request survivor guidance; update membership. Email: msc@moaa.org

<https://www.moaa.org/content/about-moaa/contact-moaa/>

VA National Cemetery Scheduling

800-535-1117

Ask about scheduling burial; have discharge and pre-need records ready.

<https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/>

VA Benefits Hotline

800-827-1000

Ask about applicable survivor, burial and benefit matters.

<https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/>

VA Headstones & Markers

800-697-6947

Ask about headstones, markers and memorial items.

<https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/>

Social Security Administration

800-772-1213 | TTY 800-325-0778

Confirm the death report and ask about survivor benefits.

<https://www.ssa.gov/personal-record/when-someone-dies>

Marine Corps Funeral Honors

866-826-3628

Marine service: request honors with proof of honorable service.

<https://www.hqmc.marines.mil/Agencies/Casualty-MFPC/Funeral-Honors/>

Military OneSource

800-342-9647

Military information and referral; confirm eligibility for services.

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/contact-us/>

Other service branches: ask your funeral director to arrange the appropriate honors contact.

Marine Corps honors email: HQMC.Funeral.Honors@USMC.mil

Chapter support: moaapalmbeach@gmail.com

Your Local Contacts

Fill in names, telephone numbers and arrangements before your family needs them

Chosen funeral home / director

Cemetery / plot office / prearranged burial contact

Clergy / faith community / celebrant

Primary family contact

Alternate family contact

Attorney / executor / personal representative

Accountant / financial advisor

Insurance / other important contact

Have discharge papers, pre-need decisions and relevant policy records available.
Give sensitive identifiers only to the appropriate agency through its secure process.

Survivor Planning Checklist

Palm Beach-Martin Counties Chapter | MOAA

1. Family contacts and instructions

Download first, then type in the fields or print and complete by hand. Save your completed copy.

Keep your completed copy privately with trusted family. Nothing is submitted to the chapter.

Record document locations. Do not put passwords, full account numbers or Social Security numbers here.

Full legal name

Date this checklist was reviewed

Primary family contact and telephone

Alternate family contact and telephone

Executor / personal representative and contact

Attorney / law firm and contact

Clergy / faith community and contact

Where this completed checklist is kept

Who has a copy and how they can access it

Personal planning worksheet; not a will, legal directive or determination of benefits.

Confirm formal arrangements with your family, advisors and relevant agencies.

Survivor Planning Checklist

Palm Beach-Martin Counties Chapter | MOAA

2. Military service and essential records

Use dropdowns where provided; type a custom answer if needed. NOAA Corps and USPHS included.

Primary uniformed service	Rank / other services served

DD214 / discharge papers: location or custodian

Retirement orders and pay records: location

SBP election / survivor coverage: records location

Arrears of pay / beneficiary records: location

VA benefit records: location or custodian

VA pre-need burial decision: location, if obtained

Marriage / family certificates: location

Will, trust and advance directives: location

Survivor Planning Checklist

Palm Beach-Martin Counties Chapter | MOAA

3. My funeral and memorial wishes

Complete the items that apply; leave others blank. Review after major family or planning changes.

Funeral home preference and contact

Burial, cremation or other preference

Cemetery / plot / prearrangement location

Faith tradition / type of service desired

Visitation / viewing preferences

Casket / urn preference and budget

Military honors / branch preference

Flag recipient / keepsake preference

Flowers or memorial donation preference

Survivor Planning Checklist

Palm Beach-Martin Counties Chapter | MOAA

4. Service, remembrance and personal wishes

Complete the items that apply; leave others blank. Review after major family or planning changes.

Clergy / officiant preference

Readers and chosen readings / prayers

Music / hymns / songs requested

Pallbearers / honorary pallbearers

Speakers / eulogy or remembrance preferences

Obituary / biography / preferred photo location

Reception / gathering location preference

Keepsakes and personal messages: instructions location

Other wishes for family to know

Survivor Planning Checklist

Palm Beach-Martin Counties Chapter | MOAA

5. Financial, household and digital records

Complete the items that apply; leave others blank. Review after major family or planning changes.

Bank / investment inventory: secure location

Insurance policies / beneficiaries: location

Pension / other income records: location

Tax preparer and records location

Property / vehicle records: location

Mortgage / debts / bills inventory: location

Household / pet care instructions: location

Digital legacy / authorized access instructions: location

Other documents or professional contacts

Survivor Planning Checklist

Palm Beach-Martin Counties Chapter | MOAA

6. Family action checklist

Use only the actions that apply. Confirm current instructions with the responsible organization.

☐ Contact chosen funeral director; record contact / date

☐ Locate discharge papers, retirement and burial records

☐ Discuss service, cemetery and military honors with director

☐ Request certified death certificates; note arrangements

☐ Contact VA about applicable survivor / burial matters

☐ Contact retired-pay office / DFAS, if applicable

☐ Confirm Social Security reporting; ask about survivor benefits

☐ Contact attorney / representative and insurance providers

☐ Notify MOAA / chapter; request surviving spouse support

Survivor Planning Checklist

Palm Beach-Martin Counties Chapter | MOAA

7. Follow-up notes and review

Complete the items that apply; leave others blank. Review after major family or planning changes.

VA / benefits contact and follow-up notes

Retired-pay / DFAS contact and follow-up notes

Social Security contact and follow-up notes

Insurance / financial institution follow-up

MOAA / chapter contact and follow-up

Other family responsibilities or open questions

Next review date

Person who helped prepare this checklist

Additional instructions location

Print completed checklist

Save your completed copy first. Print all pages with completed form fields.

If this button does not work in your viewer, use File > Print (Mac: Command-P; Windows: Ctrl-P).

Personal planning worksheet; not a will, legal directive or determination of benefits.

Confirm formal arrangements with your family, advisors and relevant agencies.